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News Analysis (19 Jun, 2021)

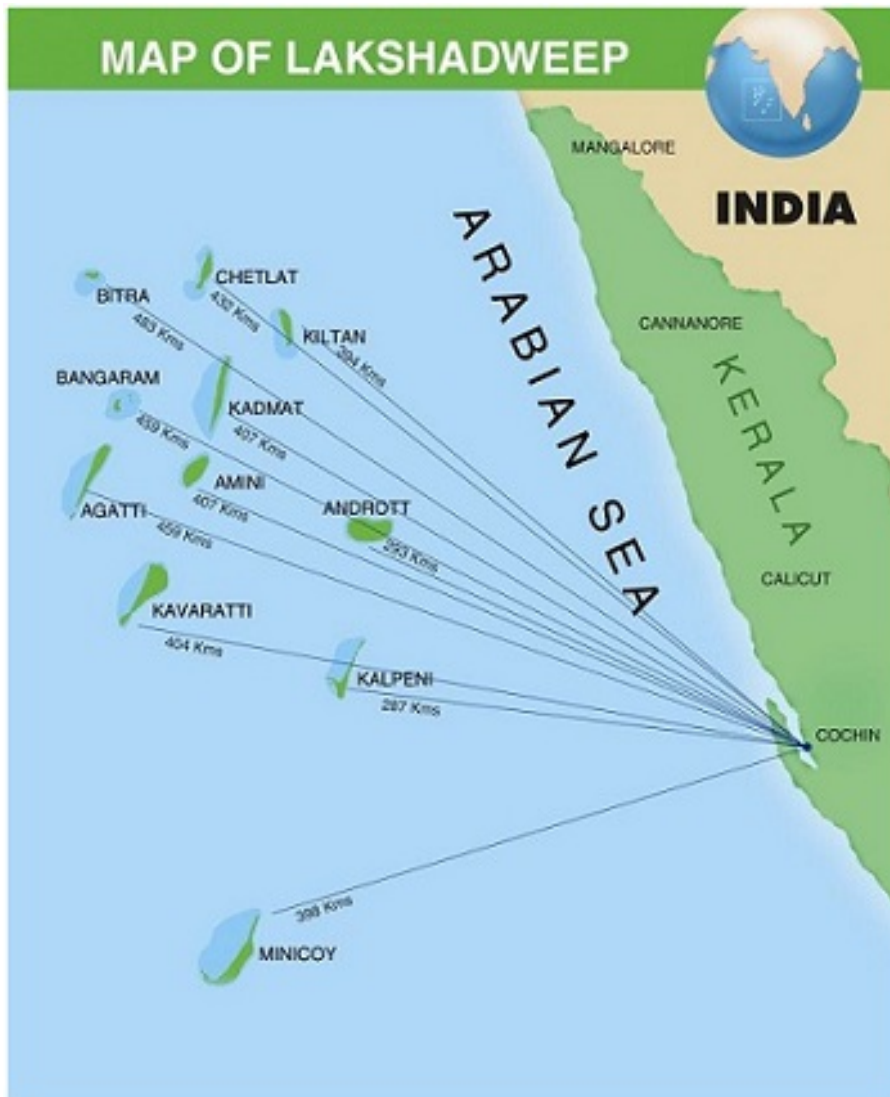
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Rising Sea Levels

Why in News

Recently, a study has projected that sea levels will rise around **Lakshadweep Islands** due to the impact of **global warming**.

- It will affect **airport and residential areas** that are quite close to the present coastline.
- **India's smallest Union Territory, Lakshadweep** is an archipelago consisting of 36 islands with an area of 32 sq km.



Key Points

- **Sea Level Rise (SLR):**
 - SLR is an **increase in the level** of the **world's oceans** due to the effects of climate change, especially **global warming**, induced by **three primary factors:** Thermal Expansion, Melting Glaciers and Loss of Greenland and Antarctica's ice sheets.
 - Sea level is primarily measured using tide stations and satellite laser altimeters.

- **SLR is Linked to Three Primary Factors:**

- **Thermal Expansion:** When water heats up, it expands. About half of the sea-level rise over the past 25 years is attributable to warmer oceans simply occupying more space.
- **Melting Glaciers: Higher temperatures** caused by global warming have led to **greater-than-average summer melting of large ice formations** like mountain glaciers as well as **diminished snowfall** due to later winters and earlier springs. That creates **an imbalance between runoff and ocean evaporation**, causing sea levels to rise.
- **Loss of Greenland and Antarctic Ice Sheets:** As with mountain glaciers, increased heat is causing the massive ice sheets that cover **Greenland and Antarctica** to melt more quickly, and also move more quickly into the sea.

- **Rate of SLR:**

- **Global:** Global sea level has been rising over the past century, and the rate has accelerated in recent decades. The average global sea level has **risen 8.9 inches between 1880 and 2015**. That's much faster than in the previous 2,700 years.

Also, **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)** released **'The Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate'** in 2019 which underlined the dire changes taking place in oceans, glaciers, and ice-deposits on land and sea.

- **Regional:** SLR is **not uniform** across the world. Regional SLR may be higher or lower than Global SLR due to subsidence, upstream flood control, erosion, regional ocean currents, variations in land height, and compressive weight of Ice Age glaciers.

- **Consequences of SLR:**

- **Coastal Flooding:** Globally, eight of the **world's 10 largest cities** are near a coast, which is threatened by coastal flooding.
- **Destruction of Coastal Biodiversity:** SLR can cause **destructive erosion**, wetland flooding, aquifer and agricultural soil contamination with salt, and lost habitat for biodiversity.
- **Dangerous Storm Surges:** Higher sea levels are coinciding with more dangerous **hurricanes** and typhoons leading to loss of life and property.
- **Lateral and Inland Migration:** Flooding in low-lying coastal areas is forcing people to migrate to the higher ground causing displacement and dispossession and in turn a **refugee crisis worldwide**.
- **Impact on Infrastructure:** The prospect of higher coastal water levels threatens basic services such as internet access.
- **Threat to Inland Life:** Rising seas can contaminate soil and groundwater with salt threatening life farther away from coasts.
- **Tourism and Military Preparedness:** Tourism to coastal areas and military preparedness will also be negatively affected by an increase in SLR.

- **Steps taken to Tackle SLR:**
 - **Relocation:** Many coastal cities have planned to adopt relocation as a mitigation strategy. For example, Kiribati Island has planned to shift to Fiji, while the **Capital of Indonesia is being relocated from Jakarta to Borneo.**
 - **Building Sea Wall:** Indonesia's government launched a coastal development project called a Giant Sea Wall or "Giant Garuda" in 2014 meant to protect the city from floods.
 - **Building Enclosures:** Researchers have proposed **Northern European Enclosure Dam** (NEED), enclosing all of the North Sea to protect 15 Northern European countries from rising seas. The **Persian Gulf**, the **Mediterranean Sea**, the **Baltic Sea**, the Irish Sea, and the Red Sea were also identified as areas that could benefit from similar mega enclosures.
 - **Architecture to Steer Flow of Water:** Dutch City Rotterdam built barriers, drainage, and innovative architectural features such as a "water square" with temporary ponds.
- **Vulnerability of India:**
 - India's **7,516-kilometre-long coastline** includes 5,422 kilometres of coastline on the mainland and 2,094 kilometres on the islands belonging to nine states and four Union Territories.
 - The coastline **accounts for 90% of the country's trade and it spans 3,331 coastal villages and 1,382 islands.**
- **India's Efforts:**
 - **Coastal Regulation Zone:**
 - The **coastal areas of seas, bays, creeks, rivers, and backwaters** which get influenced by tides up to 500 m from the high tide line (HTL) and the land between the low tide line (LTL) and the high tide line were declared as **Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ)** in 1991.
 - The latest regulation **also takes into account rising sea-levels due to global warming.**
 - **National Action Plan on Climate Change:**
 - It was **launched in 2008** by the Prime Minister's Council on Climate Change.
 - It aims at creating awareness among the representatives of the public, different agencies of the government, scientists, industry and the communities on the threat posed by climate change and the steps to counter it.

Way Forward

- The **Paris Agreement** provides a clear vision on limiting global warming and thus, SLR.

- Some of the other steps in this direction would include:
 - Switching from **fossil fuels** to clean alternatives like **solar and wind energy**.
 - Instituting carbon taxes on industries and subsidies for reducing the carbon footprint.
 - **Carbon sequestration** by geo-engineering and natural methods like restoring peatland and wetland areas to capture existing greenhouse gases.
 - **Afforestation** and reducing deforestation.
 - Subsidizing research on **climate change**.

Source: PIB

Petition to Poll Results

Why in News

Recently, the West Bengal Chief Minister has filed **an election petition** in the Calcutta High Court challenging the **Assembly election result** of Nandigram constituency.

Key Points

- **Election Petition:**
 - The **Election Commission's role ends with the declaration of results**, after that, an **election petition is the only legal remedy** available to a voter or a candidate who believes there has been malpractice in an election.
 - Such a person **can challenge the result through an election petition submitted to the High Court** of the state in which the constituency is located.
 - Such a petition **has to be filed within 45 days from the date of the poll results**; nothing is entertained by courts after that.
 - Although the **Representative of the People Act (RP Act) of 1951** suggests that the High Court should try to conclude the trial within six months, it usually drags on for much longer, even years.
- **Grounds on which Election Petition be Filed (Section 100 of the RP Act):**
 - On the day of the election, the **winning candidate was not qualified** to contest.
 - The winning candidate, his poll agent or any other person with the consent of the **winning candidate has indulged in a corrupt practice**.
 - Improper acceptance of the nomination of the winning candidate or **improper rejection** of a nomination.
 - **Malpractice in the counting process**, which includes improper reception, refusal or rejection of any vote, or the reception of any vote which is void.
 - **Non-compliance with the provisions of the Constitution or the RP Act** or any rules or orders made under the RP Act.

- **If Verdict is in favour of the Petitioner (Section 84 of the RP Act):**
 - The petitioner may ask that the **results of all or the winning candidates may be declared void.**
 - In addition to that, the **petitioner may also ask the court to declare her** (in case the petition is filed by a candidate) or any other candidate as the winner or duly elected.
 - So the verdict on an election petition, if found in favour of the petitioner, **may result in a fresh election or the court announcing a new winner.**
- **History of Election Results Declared Void:**

The most famous being the **Allahabad High Court verdict of 1975** which set aside **Indira Gandhi's election** from Rae Bareli constituency, four years earlier, on grounds of corrupt practice.

Provisions under RP Act 1951

- It **regulates the actual conduct** of elections and by-elections.
- It provides **administrative machinery** for conducting elections.
- It deals with the **registration of political parties.**
 - **Section 123 of the RP Act** has a detailed list of what amounts to corrupt practice, including **bribery, use of force or coercion, appeal to vote or refrain from voting** on grounds of religion, race, community, and language.
- It **specifies the qualifications and disqualifications** for membership of the Houses.
- It provides **provisions to curb corrupt practices** and other offences.
- It lays down the **procedure for settling doubts and disputes** arising out of elections.

Source: IE

Creation of Integrated Triservice Theatre Commands

Why in News

Recently, a **high-level committee** has been formed for the consultations on the creation of **integrated triservice theatre commands.**

The committee will examine all issues and find a way forward before a formal note on their creation is sent to the **Cabinet Committee on Security.**

Key Points

- **About the Move:**
 - The move was necessitated due to some aspects like **bringing in paramilitary forces** (which is under Home Ministry) **under the purview of the theatre commands** and **financial implications** that may arise in the process of integration.
 - The **proposed Air Defence Command** plans to integrate all air assets of the armed forces while the **Maritime Theatre Command** plans to bring in all assets of Navy, **Coast Guard** as well as coastal formations of Army and Air Force under one umbrella.
 - On land, the **Army's Northern command and Western Command** would be converted into **2-5 theatre commands**.
- **Integrated Theatre Command:**
 - An integrated theatre command **envisages a unified command** of the three Services, **under a single commander**, for geographical theatres (areas) that are of strategic and security concern.
 - The commander of such a force **will be able to bear all resources** at his disposal — from the Army, the Indian Air Force, and the Navy — with seamless efficacy.
 - The integrated theatre commander **will not be answerable** to individual Services.
 - Integration and jointness of the three forces **will avoid duplication of resources**. The resources available under each service will be available to other services too.
 - The **Shekatkar committee** (in 2015) had recommended the creation of 3 integrated theatre commands — **northern** for the China border, **western** for the Pakistan border, and **southern** for the maritime role.
- **Views in favour of Integration:**
 - The **integrated theatre commander** will not be answerable to individual Services, and will be **free to train, equip and exercise his command to make it a cohesive fighting force** capable of achieving designated goals.
 - The **logistic resources required to support its operations will also be placed at the disposal of the theatre commander** so that it does not have to look for anything when operations are ongoing.
 - This is **in contrast to the model of service-specific commands** which India currently has, wherein the Army, Air Force and Navy all have their own commands all over the country. In case of war, each Service Chief is expected to control the operations of his Service through individual commands, while they operate jointly.

- **Views against Integration:**
 - There has been **no occasion**, during actual warfare, **when the three services have not operated with commendable cooperation.**
 - Faraway land war and medium to high intensity wars are a **distant possibility.**
 - **With increased communication networks**, interaction between three organizations is easy, they can come on board, can plan without much consideration of spatial distance, so there is no need for a new organisation.
 - **Domain knowledge of the integrated force commander is likely to be limited** in respect of the other two Services components under his command, thereby limiting his ability to employ them in the most suitable manner and at the appropriate time.
- **Current Situation:**
 - The Indian armed forces currently **have 17 commands.** There are **7 commands each of the Army and the Air Force.** The Navy has **3 commands.**
Each command is headed by a 4-star rank military officer.
 - There is one **joint command in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.**
It is the **first Tri-Service theatre command** of the Indian Armed Forces, based at Port Blair in Andaman and Nicobar Islands of India.
 - The other **tri-service command**, the **Strategic Forces Command (SFC)**, looks after the delivery and operational control of the country's nuclear assets.
- **Recent Developments:**
 - The appointment of the **CDS (Chief of Defence Staff)** and the creation of the **Department of Military Affairs (DMA)** are momentous steps towards the **integration and advancement of defence forces.**
 - **CDS:** It is the **single-point military adviser to the government** as suggested by the Kargil Review Committee in 1999.
 - **Department of Military Affairs:** Work exclusively pertaining to military matters will fall within the purview of the DMA. Earlier, these functions were the mandate of the Department of Defence (DoD).
 - The Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat has **operationalised the third Joint Logistics Node (JLN) in Mumbai.**
These JLN's will provide integrated logistics cover to the Armed Forces for their small arms ammunition, rations, fuel, general stores, civil hired transport, aviation clothing, spares and also engineering support in an effort to synergise their operational efforts.

Source: TH

Herbicide Tolerant (HT) Bt Cotton

Why in News

The illegal cultivation of **Herbicide Tolerant (HT) Bt cotton** has seen a huge jump as the sale of illegal seed packets has more than doubled from 30 lakh in 2020 to 75 lakh in 2021.

Key Points

- **Bt Cotton:**
 - Bt cotton is the **only transgenic crop** that has been **approved by the Centre for commercial cultivation** in India.
 - It has been **genetically modified (GM)** to produce an insecticide to combat the **cotton bollworm**, a common pest.
- **Herbicide Tolerant Bt (HTBt) Cotton:**
 - The HTBt cotton variant adds another layer of modification, making the plant **resistant to the herbicide glyphosate**, but has not been approved by regulators.
 - **Fears** include glyphosate having a carcinogenic effect, as well as the unchecked spread of herbicide resistance to nearby plants through pollination, **creating a variety of superweeds**.
- **Need for Using HTBt Cotton:**
 - **Saves Cost:** There is a shortage of the labour needed to do at least **two rounds of weeding for Bt cotton**.
With HTBt, simply one round of glyphosate spraying is needed with no weeding. It saves Rs. 7,000 to Rs. 8,000 per acre for farmers.
 - **Support of Scientists:** Scientists are also in favour of this crop, and even the **World Health Organization (WHO)** has said it does not cause cancer.
But the government has still withheld approval for HTBt.
- **Issues Emanating from Illegal Sale of HTBt Cotton:**
 - As it is not approved by the **Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC)**, illegal sale takes place in Indian markets.
 - **Farmers are at risk** with such illegal cotton seed sale as there is **no accountability of the quality of seed, it pollutes the environment, the industry is losing legitimate seed sale and the government also loses revenue** in terms of tax collection.
 - It will not only **decimate small cotton seed companies** but also **threatens the entire legal cotton seed market** in India.

Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee

- The Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) functions under the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC)**.
- It is responsible for the appraisal of activities involving large-scale use of hazardous microorganisms and recombinants in research and industrial production from the environmental angle.

- The committee is also responsible for the appraisal of proposals relating to the release of genetically engineered (GE) organisms and products into the environment including experimental field trials.
- GEAC is chaired by the Special Secretary/Additional Secretary of MoEF&CC and co-chaired by a representative from the Department of Biotechnology (DBT).

Way Forward

- Regulators only limit their checking/regulation to licensed dealers and seed companies while illegal activity of HT seed sales is **carried mostly by unorganised and fly-by-night operators**.
Thus, focus must be shifted to catching them and taking exemplary and strong punitive action.
- **Collective action** of both centre and state government is required. The Centre has made the policy to ban this variant. But it is the State governments that must also work in tandem with the central government.
- **Environmental impact assessment** should be carried out by independent environmentalists, as farmers do not and cannot assess the long-term impact of GM crops on ecology and health.

Source: TH

Antonio Guterres: 2nd Term UN Secretary General

Why in News

The **United Nations General Assembly** appointed **Antonio Guterres as the ninth UN Secretary General (UNSG) for a second term** beginning 1st January, 2022 and ending on 31st 2026.

India had expressed its **support for the re-election of Guterres as UN Chief**.

Key Points

- **About Antonio Guterres:**
 - Guterres took **oath of office on 1st January, 2017** and his first term **ends on 31st December 2021**.
 - Guterres **served as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees** for a decade from **June 2005 to December 2015**.
 - He was the **former Prime minister of Portugal**.

- **Appointment:**
 - Under the UN Charter, the Secretary-General is **appointed by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council**.
 - **Each Secretary-General has the option of a second term** if they can garner enough support from Member states.
 - Guterres was elected **after a reformed selection process** that **included a public informal dialogue session** in the General Assembly, involving civil society representatives, aimed at ensuring transparency and inclusivity.
- **UN Charter:**
 - The **Charter of the United Nations** is the **founding document** of the United Nations. It was signed **on 26th June 1945**, in San Francisco, at the conclusion of the United Nations Conference on International Organization, and came into force on 24th October 1945.
 - The UN can take action on a wide variety of issues due to its **unique international character** and the powers vested in its Charter, which is considered an international treaty.
 - As such, the UN Charter is **an instrument of international law**, and **UN Member States are bound by it**. The UN Charter codifies the major principles of international relations, from sovereign equality of States to the prohibition of the use of force in international relations.
- **About UNGA:**
 - The General Assembly occupies a central position as the **chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ** of the United Nations.
 - Composed of all **193 Members** of the United Nations, it **provides a unique forum for multilateral discussion** of the full spectrum of international issues covered by the Charter.
 - It also plays a significant **role in the process of standard-setting and the codification of international law**.

- **UN Security Council:**
 - Established by the **UN charter in 1945**, the Security Council has the primary responsibility of **maintaining international peace and security**.
 - The Security Council has **15 members**.
 - **There are five permanent members:** the United States, the Russian Federation, France, China and the United Kingdom.
 - The **non-permanent members** of the Security Council are elected for a term of **two years**. Recently, **India has been elected**.
 - Each member of the **Security Council has one vote**. Decisions of the Security Council on matters are made by an affirmative vote of nine members including the **concurring votes of the permanent members**. A "No" vote from one of the five permanent members blocks the passage of the resolution.
 - Any member of the United Nations which is not a member of the Security Council may participate, without vote, in the discussion of any question brought before the Security Council whenever the latter considers that the interests of that member are specially affected.
- **Challenges Pertaining to UN:**
 - UNGA has **no control over veto power** exercised by UNSC and it cannot take any decisive action against permanent members of UNSC.
 - The 15-member Security Council is by far the most powerful arm of the United Nations. However, the veto power is used by **five permanent countries** to serve the strategic interest of **themselves and their allies**.
 - The **UN charter is vague** in defining the duties of the secretary general, the United Nations' top official.
 - Recently, the **World Health Organization (WHO)** has been criticised by the US on account of mishandling of the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequently suspended its financial contribution to WHO.
 - Also, WHO has been under pressure from the US government to adopt an approach that favours interests of US pharma companies.
 - WHO is **a specialised agency of the UN**.

United Nations

- **Establishment:**

The **United Nations (UN)** is an international organization founded in **1945**.
- **Members:**
 - It is currently **made up of 193 Member States**.
 - **India is a charter member of the United Nations** and participates in all of its specialised agencies and organizations.
- **Activities:**

Its activities include maintaining international peace and security, protecting human rights, delivering humanitarian aid, promoting sustainable development and upholding international law.

- **Main Organs:**
 - **The General Assembly,**
 - **The Security Council,**
 - **The Economic and Social Council,**
 - **The Trusteeship Council,**
 - **The International Court of Justice,**
 - **The UN Secretariat.**
- **Funds and Programmes:**
 - **United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)**
 - **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**
 - **United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment)**
 - **United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)**
 - **World Food Programme (WFP)**

Way Forward

- The UN must act as a catalyst and a platform for more inclusive, networked and effective forms of **multilateralism**.
- The power to transform the current situation into a better world and future for all depends on everyone everywhere and can only be done successfully if the efforts towards a common agenda for the benefit of humanity and the planet is resolved.

Source: IE

Censorship of Films in India

Why in News

The **Ministry of Information and Broadcasting** has recently sought public comments on its **draft Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill, 2021**, which proposes to bring back its “revisionary powers” over the **Central Board of Film Certification**.

The new Bill will also “make the process of sanctioning of films for exhibition more effective, in tune with the changed times and curb the menace of piracy”.

Key Points

- **Background:**
 - The **Supreme Court of India** (SC) in November 2000, had upheld a **Karnataka High Court** order which struck down the Centre’s “**revisional powers in respect of films that are already certified by the Board**”.
 - However, the SC had **opined that the Legislature may, in certain cases, overrule or nullify the judicial or executive decision** by enacting an appropriate legislation”.
- **Provision of Draft Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill, 2021:**
 - **Granting Revisionary Powers:** The government on account of violation of **Section 5B(1) of the Cinematograph Act, 1952** can order for “re-examination” by the certification board of an already certified film, following receipt of complaints.
 - **Section 5B(1)** deals with the **principles for guidance in certifying films**. It is **derived from Article 19(2) of the Constitution** and is non-negotiable.
 - Under **Section 6 of the existing Cinematograph Act, 1952**, the Centre is already empowered to call for the record of proceedings in relation to certification of a film and pass any order thereon.

The Central Government, if the situation warranted, **has the power to reverse the decision of the Board.**
 - **Sub-division of Existing UA Category:** The provisions relating to certification of films under “unrestricted public exhibition (U/A)” category are proposed to be amended so as to sub-divide the existing UA category **into age-based categories like U/A 7+, U/A 13+ and U/A 16+**.
 - **Film Piracy:** In most cases, illegal duplication in cinema halls is the originating point of piracy. At present, there are no enabling provisions to check film piracy in the Cinematograph Act, 1952. The draft Bill proposes to **insert Section 6AA** which prohibits unauthorised recording.

Punishment for Piracy: Section 6AA of the draft legislation makes piracy a punishable offence.

The punishment of **imprisonment for a term upto three years** and with a fine which shall not be less than Rs 3 lakh but which may extend to 5% of the audited gross production cost or with both.
 - The recommendations of the **Justice Mukul Mudgal Committee of 2013** and the **Shyam Benegal Committee of 2016** had also been considered while drafting the legislation.

- **Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC):**

- It is a **statutory body** under the **Ministry of Information and Broadcasting**, regulating the public exhibition of films under the provisions of the **Cinematograph Act 1952**.
- The Board consists of **non-official members** and a **Chairman** (all of whom are appointed by Central Government) and functions with **headquarters at Mumbai**.
- Films can be publicly exhibited in India (on cinema halls, T.V. channels) only after they have been certified by the Central Board of Film Certification.
- **At present, films are certified under 4 categories: U, U/A, A& S.**
 - Unrestricted Public Exhibition (U)
 - Unrestricted Public Exhibition - but with a word of caution that Parental discretion required for children below 12 years (U/A)
 - Restricted to adults (A)
 - Restricted to any special class of persons (S)
- **Provisions for Censorship:**
 - **Article 19(2) of the Constitution** authorises the government to impose, by law, reasonable restrictions upon the freedom of speech and expression in the interests of the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the State, friendly relations with foreign States, public order, decency or morality or in relation to contempt of court, defamation or incitement to an offence.
 - The **Cinematograph Act, 1952** also provides for similar provisions as stated under Article 19(2).

Source: IE

Disability Early Intervention Centres

Why in News

Recently, the **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** has launched **14 cross-disability early intervention centres** across the country to provide support to **infants and young children** at risk of or **with disabilities**.

Disabilities

- Disabilities is an **umbrella term**, covering impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions.
 - An **impairment** is a problem in body function or structure;
 - An **activity limitation** is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or action;
 - A **participation restriction** is a problem experienced by an individual in involvement in life situations.

- The **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** adopts a broad categorization of persons with disabilities and reaffirms that all persons with all types of disabilities must enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms.
India has ratified the Convention and has enacted 'The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016'.

Key Points

- **About:**
 - The **services provided at the centres will include** screening of children and referral to appropriate **rehabilitative care; speech therapy, occupational therapy and physiotherapy; parental counselling** and training and peer counselling.
 - These centers will also **focus on school readiness.**
- **Need:**
 - **Scenario from 2011 Census:**
 - There are **more than 20 lakh** children with disabilities in the age group of **0-6 years**, who belong to the categories of visually impaired, hearing impaired, locomotor disability etc.
 - This means that **around 7% of children** in this age group suffer from some form of disability.
 - **Expected Rise in Number:**

The number of such children is expected to increase as the **Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016**, increases the number of disabilities to 21 from 7.
 - **0-6 Years is a Critical Phase:**
 - Early Childhood (0-6 years) is the **most critical phase of brain** development. Early intervention can provide specialised support and services for infants and young children at-risk or with disability or developmental delay and their families to help their development, well-being and participation in family and community life.
 - This can **lead to lesser economic burden** by creating a better future and independent/less dependent lives.

- **Other Initiatives for Disabled:**

- **Right of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016:** Besides increasing the number of disabilities, it increases the quantum of reservation for people suffering from disabilities from 3% to 4% in government jobs and from 3% to 5% in higher education institutes.
- **Accessible India Campaign:** Creation of Accessible Environment for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs).
- **Unique Disability Identification (UDID) Portal:** The project is being implemented with a view of creating a **National Database for PwDs**, and to issue a **Unique Disability Identity Card** to each PwD.
- **DeenDayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme: Financial assistance is provided to NGOs** for providing various services to PwDs, like special schools, vocational training centres, community based rehabilitation, pre-school and early intervention etc.
- **Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase / fitting of Aids and Appliances (ADIP):** Aims at **helping the disabled persons** by bringing suitable, durable, scientifically-manufactured, modern, standard aids and appliances within their reach.
- **National Fellowship for Students with Disabilities:** To increase opportunities for students with disabilities to pursue higher education, 200 Fellowships per year are granted.
- **Schemes of the National Trust** for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities.

Way Forward

- Identification of at-risk cases, **especially in rural areas**, is an important aspect and it is also important to provide necessary assistance and counselling to their parents in time.
- Research shows that the **first 1000 days of a child's life are crucial** to ensure healthy development, so it is very important to identify the risk cases at an early age so that the severity of the disability can be reduced through appropriate measures.

Source: TH

IN-EUNAVFOR Joint Naval Exercise

Why in News

The maiden Indian Navy - European Union Naval Force (IN-EUNAVFOR) Exercise is being conducted in **Gulf Of Aden**.



Key Points

- **Participants**
 - Along with **Indian Navy**, other naval forces are from **Italy, Spain and France**.
 - The naval exercise **included** advanced air defence and anti-submarine exercises, tactical manoeuvres, Search & Rescue, and other maritime security operations.
- **Aim:**

To enhance and hone their **war-fighting skills** and their ability as an **integrated force to promote peace, security and stability** in the maritime domain.
- **Significance:**
 - EUNAVFOR and the Indian Navy converge on multiple issues including **counter piracy operations** and **protection of vessels deployed** under the charter of **World Food Programme (UN WFP)**.
 - The two navies also have regular interaction through **SHADE (Shared Awareness and Deconfliction)** meetings held annually at Bahrain.
 - **SHADE** is an **international operational counter piracy platform**, convened in **Bahrain**.
 - It aimed to encourage partners for sharing information, assessing the evolution of trends, best practices and to de-conflict operations amongst counter-piracy actors in the Gulf of Aden, the **Gulf of Oman and the Western Indian Ocean**.
 - It also underscores the shared values in ensuring **freedom of seas and commitment to an open, inclusive and a rules-based international order**.
 - Concurrently, a virtual “**Information sharing Exercise**” is also being conducted between the **Indian Navy Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region** and **Maritime Security Centre-Horn of Africa**, an integral part of EUNAVFOR.

Major Indian Maritime Exercises

Name of the Exercise	Name of the Country
<u>SLINEX</u>	Sri Lanka
<u>Bongosagar and IN-BN CORPAT</u>	Bangladesh
<u>JIMEX</u>	Japan
Naseem-Al-Bahr	Oman
<u>Indra</u>	Russia
<u>Za'ir-Al-Bahr</u>	Qatar
<u>Samudra Shakti</u>	Indonesia
<u>Indo-Thai CORPAT</u>	Thailand
IMCOR	Malaysia
<u>SIMBEX</u>	Singapore
AUSINDEX	Australia
<u>Malabar Exercise</u>	Japan, and the USA

Source: PIB
